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Psychology in India Enters the Twenty-first Century: Movement toward an Indigenous Discipline

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This chapter reviews salient features of the progress and emerging research and professional trends in psychology in India. For a historical perspective and continuity, this report should be read together with the concluding chapters of the previous two surveys (Pandey, 1988; Pareek, 1981). As each thematic chapter of the Fourth Survey has covered emerging trends in a particular research area, this chapter identifies the general trends and dynamic movement of the discipline.

A brief recapitulation of history of psychology in India would facilitate the development of perspectives for the present objectives. The foundations

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of the discipline in pre-independent India were laid with the establishment of the first psychology department in 1915 at Calcutta University followed by Mysore (1924), and Patna (1946), and the introduction of teaching of psychology courses and the establishment of laboratories in philosophy departments at Lucknow (1929), Aligarh (1932), Patna (1934), and Varanasi (1938) (Dalal, 1990; 1996; D. Sinha, 1986). Other well recognised historical milestones included the founding of the Indian Psychological Association in 1924, the launch of the *Indian Journal of Psychology* in 1926, the establishment of the Indian Psychoanalytic Society in 1922, and the inclusion of psychology as an independent section in the Indian Science Congress Association in 1923 (Barnett, 1955; Dalal, 1990; Nandy, 1974; J. Pandey, 1981; 1988; D. Sinha, 1986). Post-independence expansion of the discipline has been phenomenal both in terms of the number of new departments and research activities (Ganguly, 1971; Mitra, 1972; Pareek, 1980–81; J. Pandey, 1988). Since the 1950s critical reviews of the discipline both by Indian and foreign scholars have played a constructive role in shaping the path of progress of psychology (R.E. Pandey, 1969; Singh & Dalal, 1988; D. Sinha, 1977; 1981a; 1981b; 1983; 1984; 1986; J.B.P. Sinha, 1984). The last decade, in particular, witnessed a great deal of critical writings evaluating the nature of progress of psychology (Adair, Puhan, & Vohra, 1993; Dalal, 1996; Misra & Gergen, 1993a; Misra, Prakash, & Verma, 1999; Mohanty, 1988; 1990; J. Pandey, 2000; J.B.P. Sinha, 1993; 1995; J.B.P Sinha & Prakash, 1993). These reviews constitute a body of literature serving the purpose of determining, guiding and steering the course of development of the discipline. Scholars engaged in evaluating and commenting on the progress of the discipline have made significant contributions to a body of literature known as "Critical Psychology". Others have used the term "critical psychology" to refer to a critique of the dominant positivist paradigm and the resulting crisis in psychology. In the present context, however, it is used for an appraisal of the facilitating and inhibiting factors determining the course of development of the discipline.

In the concluding chapter of the Third Survey, Pandey (1988) highlighted a set of interrelated general trends such as:

1. Outgrowing the alien framework.
2. Roots of psychology in Indian philosophical thought and tradition.
3. Psychological assessment in a sociocultural context.
4. Psychology for socioeconomic change and national development.
5. Cross-cultural psychology and partnership for research.

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The common concern in all these trends is indigenisation and applied relevance of psychology in the Indian sociocultural context. The focus of the discussion will be on both issues related to indigenisation of the discipline and the extent of its application for human welfare.

INDIGENISATION OF PSYCHOLOGY

Over the last two decades necessity, process and obstacles in the indigenisation of psychology have been extensively discussed and examined. Pandey (1988) argued that to achieve the goal of universal psychology, the first step is the development of indigenous psychologies in various sociocultural contexts worldwide. The concern for indigenisation of knowledge has not been limited to either psychology or India. In the former colonies, a strong visible trend towards decolonisation of knowledge by challenging the intellectual domination of the West has been observed. For example, the well known philosopher, Bhattacharya (1954) argued in favour of *swaraj* or self-rule in ideas. Sociologist Yogesh Atal (1981) who headed UNESCO's Asian office in Bangkok for two decades, argued that the indigenisation movement began "...to gain momentum in the early 1970s when indigenous scholars from the third world raised their voice against the implantation of social sciences perpetuating captivity of mind" (p. 189). Eminent anthropologist and sociologist, S.C. Dube (1979) observed that the leaders of social sciences "...have not been able to decolonize their minds either in the respect of theory and method, or in choice of themes for research and analytical treatment" (p. 6). Another eminent sociologist Y. Singh (1986) talked about the social conditioning of knowledge.

The call for indigenisation has to go beyond the reactive phase and should not remain mere rhetoric. In the long run, continuing to appear as "courageous natives talking back to alien masters" would prove counterproductive and would not facilitate the development of indigenous disciplines. It is, therefore, important to recognise the positive aspects of indigenisation which must "...stimulate such scholarly endeavour so as to promote thoughtful analysis of their own...to replace the existing trend of knowing these via the west" (Atal, 1981, p. 192). By attending to historical and cultural specificities, indigenisation should not lead to narrow parochialism. On the other hand, the objectives of indigenisation should be the development of alternative perspectives and research paradigms for the study of man and societies to "Emancipate the mind and improve the quality of professional praxis" (Atal, 1981, p. 192). While elaborating the nature and goals of indigenisation,

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Krishna Kumar (1979) proposed three complementary aspects of indigenisation.

1. *Structural indigenisation* should lead to reorienting organisational and institutional capabilities for the diffusion of social science knowledge.
2. *Substantive indigenisation* should focus on its own society, people, economic and political institutions in research.
3. *Theoretical indigenisation* should lead to the construction of distinctive conceptual frameworks and metatheories reflecting the socioculturally conditioned scientific developments.

D. Sinha (1997) added another aspect which may be referred to as "indigenization of methods". In a way the process of indigenisation begins with the choice of a contextually appropriate and relevant framework, topic for research, definition of theoretical concepts, and method of research (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). This task is, however, complex and gradual.

The concepts, methods and priority areas of research must reflect the nature and dynamics of society to qualify for indigenous social science. D. Sinha (1997) recognised "indigenizing psychology" as a process and provided a comprehensive definitional analysis, theoretical rationale, types, level and worldwide progress in the indigenisation of psychology. Adair, Puhan, and Vohra (1993) emphasised the process aspect of indigenisation of psychology representing the culture in which behaviour is studied. Accordingly, such a discipline would be culturally appropriate. Emphasising the process nature of indigenisation, D. Sinha (1997) asserted ".... Indigenization is an ongoing process rather than a finished product; it is gradual and comes about in stages" (p. 134). Thus, the progress towards indigenisation of psychology in India should be examined as a process with an emphasis on the identification of factors facilitating and inhibiting this process.

A number of reports evaluating this process are available (Adair, Puhan, & Vohra, 1993; D. Sinha, 1997; J.B.P. Sinha, 1995; J.B.P Sinha & Prakash 1993; Misra & Mohanty, 2002; Mohanty, 1998; Pandey, 1988). Set in motion since independence, the trend of indigenising psychology in India developed through gradual stages and has been articulated since the 1980s (D. Sinha, 1997). Although both "indigenous psychology" and "indigenisation" are frequently used interchangeably, D. Sinha (1997) explained, "The former refers to psychology that is generated and develops in a particular culture and utilizes its collective creations, constructs, and categories. The latter refers to a process of the transformation of the imported elements of

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modern psychology to make them appropriate to the socio-cultural setting" (p. 133). For both "indigenous" and "indigenisation" of psychology, India has the most fertile soil. The concepts, theories and constructs of psychology can be traced to ancient philosophical and religious texts (such as the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Bhagwad Gita*), which offer insightful discourses on the nature of consciousness, volition of mind, cognition, motivation, emotion, and other mental processes. The *Bhagwad Gita* offers an excellent discourse on the nature of anger, which is partly postulated in Western psychology in the form of the frustration–aggression hypothesis. The transformation of such indigenous knowledge in modern science necessitates the rigour of operationalisation of concepts and the development of innovative paradigmatic research methodology. This calls for a dedicated group of researchers who constructively contribute to and complement progress in the scientific discipline. Some progress has been made in this direction. For example, Pande and Naidu (1992) studied *anasakti* (non-attachment) and health which aroused the attention of fellow colleagues who cited this study extensively. However, this line of research has neither been pursued by those who initiated it nor by those who appreciated it. This is an example of one good effort rather than that of paradigmatic progress of science.

PROGRESS IN INDIGENISATION

The edited volume *Perspectives on indigenous psychology* (Misra & Mohanty, 2002) brings together representative facets of the development of indigenous psychology in India. Several of the contributors to this volume have questioned the inappropriate emphasis on Western theories, methods and priorities of research, leading to decades of stagnation in the discipline. This work also analyses the process, limitations and extent of indigenisation of the discipline. According to Misra and Mohanty (2002), "In recent years scholars have started moving towards reorienting psychological discourse by locating it in the culturally rooted conceptual space" (p. 15). They add, "...person and social situation both mutually define each other" (p. 18). Therefore, the emphasis should not be only on the search for simple cause–effect relationships but "...in understanding, reading and interpreting the behavioural episodes and informing about the potentialities of action within the range of possibilities available in the culture" (p. 18). In such an approach, the researcher is a co-constructionist with a person whose present and future behaviours are to be understood. Misra and Mohanty (2002) advocated an

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innovative methodology with a new toolbox to study culturally constituted psychological phenomena. The participatory methodology being creative and emancipatory would, in turn, enrich and enhance an indigenous and culturally sensitive study of psychological phenomena.

There is a visible shift toward cultural sensitivity and social relevance in psychological research (Kao & Sinha, 1997; Misra & Verma, 1995; Pandey, 1988; 2001; 2002; Paranjpe & Ribber, 1988). During the last two decades, efforts have not been limited to merely questioning Western psychological constructs and methods, but have also been made to develop alternative theoretical and methodological innovations in various areas such as developmental, personality, social, clinical, and organisational psychology. There are numerous examples of the successful utilisation of the indigenous approach to the study of psychological phenomena. The contributions included in the volumes of the Fourth Survey (Pandey, 2001; 2002; 2004) corroborate the efforts of Indian psychologists in shaping psychology in an indigenous and culturally sensitive direction. Misra, Prakash, and Verma (1999) discussed discernible, developments in terms of theoretical and methodological innovations in social, clinical, and organisational contexts. Most of these innovative and creative research efforts have been discussed in the Fourth Survey. For example,

1. Guru-chela paradigm of therapy (Neki, 1973).
2. Nurturant task style of leadership (J.B.P. Sinha, 1980).
3. Analysis of self, psyche, and personality (Kakar, 1995; 1996; Nandy, 1983; 1995; Pande & Naidu, 1992; Paranjpe, 1984; D. Sinha & Naidu, 1994).
4. Conceptualisation of achievement (Agarwal & Misra, 1986; 1987; Dalal, Singh, & Misra, 1988; Misra & Agarwal, 1985).
5. Culture and emotions (Jain, 1994).
6. Sociocultural context of justice (Berman, Murphy-Berman, & Singh, 1985; Krishnan, 1997).
7. Morality and developmental issues (Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Misra, 1991; Saraswathi, 1999; Shweder, Mohapatra, & Miller, 1987).
8. Organisational values (Prakash, 1994; J.B.P. Sinha, 1990).
9. Organisational intervention and development (Chakraborty, 1993).
10. Methodological innovations (Puhan, 1994).

Though these examples of innovative indigenous efforts are laudable, the question remains whether this emerging trend has succeeded in influencing

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mainstream psychology (bulk of psychology) in terms of academic programmes of teaching and research.

INFLUENCE OF CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH ON INDIGENISATION

The phenomenal advances in cross-cultural research during the last three decades covering most of the areas of psychology have seriously questioned the claim of positivists and experimentalists regarding the universal application of research findings (Berry, 1989; Berry, Dasen, Pierre, & Saraswathi, 1997; Berry, Poortinga, & Pandey, 1997; Berry, Segall, & Kagitcibasi, 1997; Moghaddam, 1990). General psychology's claim of the universality of psychological phenomena has limitations. "The cross-culturalists argue strongly that without a study of the psychological phenomena across cultures the claim of universality of psychological laws and theories is a fraud" (Pandey, 1996, p. 358).

The significance of culture in understanding cognitive, affective, and connative processes has received special attention to the extent that some scholars like Shweder (1990), unlike cross-culturalists, do not consider culture and behaviour as distinguishable. They prefer to call it "cultural psychology" which advocates that "culture and behaviour are not separable" (Pandey, 1996, p. 358) and in this sense all behaviours are cultural. This perspective further strengthens the position of psychological pluralism, which obviously calls for the development of indigenous psychologies.

The recent cognitive revolution has influenced various areas of psychology including the meaning of culture and its linkages with behaviour and psychological processes. According to Pandey (1996), "The cognitive orientation implies that the individual experiences, analyses, and interprets culture in his own ways" (p. 359). Social constructionists as well as cultural psychologists consider culture not as "given" and "out there" rather as constructed by individuals. Misra and Gergen (1993a) argued in favour of "interpretative modes of knowing". They asserted, "culture is inescapably psychological in composition" (Misra & Gergen, 1993a, p. 226). Further, they strongly advocated "...reorienting the human scientific enterprise in a culturally sensitive fashion" (p. 238).

Thus, the social constructionist, cross-cultural, and cultural approaches have been a major impetus for the development of an indigenous approach

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to psychology. Kim and Berry (1993) termed it the "indigenous psychologies approach". Obviously, it implies that "...there have to be many such psychologies emerging and developing in different cultures" (Pandey, 1996, p. 359). Thus, the indigenous psychologies approach has the potential to move towards the goal of achieving universal concepts, principles and laws. This approach does not a priori assume the existence of psychological universals and, therefore, it does not accept without empirical verification of psychological methods, theories, findings, and their applications.

EVALUATION OF PROGRESS IN INDIGENISATION

There are ongoing debates on various aspects of indigenisation of psychology. The impact of the call for indigenisation of psychology demands an evaluation in terms of the extent to which scientific research is conducted, reported, and discussed. Although various general assessments based on examples of indigenous constructs and conceptual analysis have been made by several senior psychologists (Dalal, 1996; Misra & Mohanty, 2002; D. Sinha, 1997; J.B.P. Sinha, 1993; J.B.P. Sinha & Prakash, 1993), the most objective and systematic assessment of indigenisation of research was done by Adair, Puhan, and Vohra (1993). They considered indigenisation as a gradual process, which may be operationalised and measured. The authors developed detailed methodology of content analysis of research articles published in representative journals over a specified time period. They identified the following four measures of indigenisation.

Does Research Emanate from Culture?

Adair, Puhan, and Vohra (1993) argued that for the development of indigenous science, the most critical factor is emanation of research from the culture in which it is conducted. According to them, advanced level of indigenousness should include specific hypotheses reflecting culture specific variables. They advocated that "Expressions of special needs for the research to be conducted within the culture, such as the lack of prior research or some unique relevance of the topic, would characterize culture-based justifications" (p. 152). Thus, research emanating from religion, social–cultural

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accepted in the couple of decades but the process had been slow. On the basis of an analysis of development of social sciences in the post-independence period, Narula (1990) concluded that apart from a lack of indigenous theory there was a failure to develop indigenous methodologies.

PERCEPTIONS AND OPINIONS OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

Why has indigenisation of psychology been a slow process in India? The best way to answer this question is to assess the perceptions and opinions of Indian psychologists regarding indigenisation and development of the discipline. The reasons for the lack of a paradigmatic shift may be found in the views of Indian psychologists on the discipline. Adair, Pandey, Begum, Puhan, and Vohra (1995) reported the findings of their studies based on Indian (N = 64) and Bangladeshi psychologists (N = 29). The discussion here will focus on the findings of research based on Indian psychologists. The survey of Indian psychologists was conducted to assess their perceptions of research resource. The responses to the survey, an effective response rate of 60 per cent, were obtained from 64 psychologists who had published during the 1984–87 period. Motivations and research efforts of psychologists were critical determinants of the development of the discipline. According to Adair et al. (1995), "The development of the discipline in any country is an interactive function of: (a) the general economic and political atmosphere within the country, (b) national resources and their investment in higher education, and (c) the structure and management of universities and other research institutions" (p. 394). They argued that these three factors shaped the motivations, perceptions, and opinions of researchers. Apparently, the "intellectual climate" was dynamically shaped by a set of interactive factors like working conditions, resources, and structure of the research organisations. However, "...the intellectual climate is largely socially and cognitively created by intangible elements, such as motivations, collegial support, shared work values, ethics and standards, and explicit and implied incentives for research" (Adair et al., 1995, p. 394). To understand the forces that shape psychological research in the country, an analysis of the responses of 64 Indian psychologists both with and without foreign experience revealed, "...the central concern for psychologists in India is the lack of a supportive intellectual climate" (p. 401). There were hardly any initiatives to make departments and their faculty accountable in terms of quality of doctoral supervision, teaching evaluations, and faculty annual reports. The preference

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of Indian psychologists to publish in foreign journals motivated them to adopt Western concepts, theories, methods and universalistic interpretations of results which probably obstructed the development of a contextually relevant indigenous science with impact value in terms of application.

Psychologists participating in the survey revealed their preference for more hypothesis testing and less exploratory research. They felt the need to be sensitive to their culture and positively rated the potential of the discipline in contributing to issues of national importance.

The preference to publish quality research in foreign journals is shared by psychologists in India as also elsewhere with the exception of the United States (Adair et al., 1995). Indian psychologists with foreign experience "...have a different view of science that leads them to be more accepting of a western model and more critical of the flaws within the local research milieu" (Adair et al., 1995, p. 404). It was found that foreign orientation and training of the participants made them more inclined to a Western model and more critical of the local research environment. The motivation and practice to publish in foreign journals led to lesser visibility of the models for quality research locally. In addition, it weakened the move towards indigenisation of the discipline, as the demands of foreign journals were more towards universal psychology, which accorded lesser importance to local contextual and cultural variables.

ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS REGARDING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The reasons for the absence of a paradigmatic shift may be found in the views expressed clearly in the written comments of Indian psychologists on the discipline (Adair, Pandey, Begum, Puhan, & Vohra, 1995). The content analysis of written comments (Pandey & Adair, 1994) was done in four stages: (*a*) In stage 1, the handwritten comments of each respondent were typed verbatim into a computer file, (*b*) after respondents' typed comments were studied in detail, thematic categories were drawn up for classification of ideas and opinions. The nature of their responses determined the categories in to which they were placed. Simply put, the "block and copy" function in WordPerfect was used to move each word or passage recorded at stage 1 into one of these categories, (*c*) in stage 3, the categories of stage 2 were refined, and distinctive items were placed in outline form within each category. During this process, only essential ideas were retained. Excess words, and repetition of similar words and ideas were deleted. In other words, a comment

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by more than one person was included only once in stage 3 listings. The process of not imposing any numerical frequency criteria for the inclusion of ideas helped systematise loose and scattered responses into a meaningful framework. The two authors discussed content analysis at various stages and worked independently at stage 3 and the subsequent stages to avoid any possible biases and to maximise content analysis consistency, and (*d*) stage 4 involved conceptual reorganisation of the categories and remarks into a conceptual framework developed as a flow chart of factors influencing the development of the discipline. This flow chart was based on a model of discipline development proposed by Adair et al. (1993). In a sense, the placement of stage 3 items within stage 4 categories represents a means for validating the proposed model.

The factors identified by the respondents as contributing to the development and the current state of psychology in India are presented in Table 8.1 and are grouped into three broad categories: (*a*) societal/governmental level factors, (*b*) institutional/national discipline level resources, and (*c*) departmental/personal factors that shape the academic/intellectual climate in which psychologists work.

Societal level factors reflect the public's awareness and recognition of the discipline and its various uses. Greater recognition by society facilitates discipline growth through resource distribution and job opportunities for psychologists. Similarly, government recognition of its applied value is an important prerequisite for the involvement of psychologists in policy planning, intervention programmes, and for setting adequate funding levels for research granting agencies.

At the institutional level, resources include library/laboratory, teaching/research training programmes, and professional organisations. Individual comments by respondents are grouped under these categories in Table 8.1. Poor library resources, unavailability of textbooks, and poor quality of journals were identified by the respondents as influencing academic training and research programmes. It was believed that ineffective professional associations in particular would create a leadership void within the discipline.

Societal indifference coupled with lack of resources and leadership at the institutional level contribute to the less than adequate academic/intellectual climate reported by Indian psychologists. These factors contribute to the low morale and motivation of psychologists at both the individual and collective levels. The research environment is rendered even less effective by the absence of recognition and rewards for research, minimal demands for accountability, and a host of interpersonal factors. For example, the lack of personal commitment, professional interaction, and collegial support makes the research environment the most serious concern for Indian psychologists.

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Table 8.1 Problems Associated with the Development of Psychology

Society and Government Lack of Societal	*Institutional/National Level Resources Libraries/ Laboratories Lack of*	*Academic/Intellectual Climate, Departmental Institutional Practices Lack in*
Awareness and favourable attitudes toward psychology	Quality textbooks and textbooks on the Indian context	Academic leadership
Familiarity with applications of psychology	Journals	Accountability
Due recognition of researchers	Computers and computerised database	Objectivity in decision-making
Job opportunities for psychologists	General financial resources	Recognition of merit
	Equipment	Fair distribution of resources
Lack of Governmental	*Research Training & Teaching Programmes Lack Quality*	*Personal and Interpersonal Dimension: Psychologists Lack*
Recognition of discipline relevance for social policy	MA & PhD curricula and review	Commitment and professional discipline
Acceptance of applied benefits	Training facilities	Academic motives
Application of the discipline in developmental programmes	Effective teaching and expertise of teachers	Cooperation, collegial support, and teamwork
Recognition of psychologists' role in solution of problems		Nurturing role for junior colleagues
Funding Agencies Failure to Provide	*Professional Organizations and Leadership Fail to*	
Adequate funds for research	Effectively organise and professionally socialise researchers	Set standards for professional values
Effective leadership (e.g., the UGC, the ICSSR)	Organise conferences	Develop effective institutions and departments
	Lobby with governmental agencies for an enhanced role of psychology in policy making	

Academic factors associated with indigenisation of the discipline and psychologists' contribution to the solution of national and social problems are presented in Table 8.2. It is clear that at the cognitive level Indian

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Table 8.2 Considerations Associated with the Development of an Indigenous Discipline Relevant to Society

Need for Indigenisation	*Perception of Discipline Relevance*
Non-applicability of Western models	Lack of applied research
Most researches are copies of the West	Psychologists remain distant from society
Not even IQ tests like the WAIS exist	Psychologists follow the natural science model
Impediments for Indigenisation	Research for research's sake only
Westernisation of researchers	Apathy and indifference to national priorities
Obsession with existing methods	Lack of research directing social change
Uncritical emulation of Western models, concepts, and theories	Lack of applied research databank
Aspiration to be recognised in the West	
Effect of Over indigenisation	*Discipline Status*
Too much will cause isolation	Failure to make an impact
Not healthy for the development of the discipline	Psychologists have an identity crisis
	Failure to develop interfaces with other disciplines
	Ineffective national professional organisation
	Researches confined to books and journals
	Largely a theoretical discipline

psychologists have recognised the inadequacies of Western psychology, the need for sensitivity to their own culture, and the importance of research applications to national and social problems.

While recognising the need for indigenisation and the development of indigenous models, the respondents also identified a number of impeding factors such as Western education and obsession with existing methods; blind emulation of Western models and concepts; and aspirations to be recognised in the west. On the other hand, some respondents suggested that the indigenisation process should be balanced because too much of it may lead to isolation.

The inadequate involvement of psychologists in the solution of social, economic, and political problems for national development was attributed by the respondents to a number of factors such as remaining aloof from societal problems, following natural science models in research, and a general indifference towards national priorities. These factors, in turn, explain the poor status of the discipline in society and its limited role in government planning and programmes.

One of the positive features of the open-ended responses was that the respondents suggested strategies for addressing the discipline's dilemmas (see Table 8.3). To begin with, the respondents suggested goals, directions and

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Table 8.3 Considerations Associated with the Development of an Indigenous Psychology

Goals	*Strategies for Actions*	
The Discipline Should Move Toward	*By Professional Organisations*	*By Institutions/ Departments*
Critical examination of Western concepts	Effective national representation of the profession	Curriculum changes in MA & PhD programmes
An indigenous science (concepts, theories, methods, and applications)	Publication of quality journals	Training in culturally appropriate methodology
Study of emic and etic aspects of behaviour	Develop interface between psychology and developmental programmes of the government and NGOs	Provide professional, real world exposure to students
Research on nationally relevant problems such as intergroup harmony; aggression, violence, and terrorism; regionalism; poverty, yoga	Educate the public via radio and television programmes	Training to apply research to the real world
Interdisciplinary and social science orientation of psychology	Demonstration of applications	Encourage young researchers to specialise
	Lobbying with governmental agencies for psychology	Organise courses for faculty development including exposure to developments abroad
	By Granting Agencies	Encourage writing of culturally suitable textbooks
	Develop thematic research programmes	Develop fair and equitable policy for faculty selection, promotion, and resource sharing
	System for objective assessment of research proposals	
	Establish separate teaching and research institutions	
	Organise academic exchanges	

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research priorities for the discipline. They visualised that the discipline should move towards the development of an indigenous science in terms of concepts, theories, models, and applications. Suggestions were made to examine nationally relevant topics such as communal and intergroup harmony, and poverty. Indian psychologists recommended an interdisciplinary approach for research, yet the maintenance of a social science orientation for the discipline.

The strategies they proposed called upon one of several collectivities to act on behalf of the discipline: (*a*) professional organisations, (*b*) research granting agencies, and (*c*) institutions/departments. The strategies for action to achieve these objectives were quite comprehensive. Specifically, respondents attached importance to an effective national level professional organisation and publication of high quality journals. The professional organisations should make efforts to educate the government and society regarding the applications of psychology. For granting agencies, they highlighted the need for more objective assessment for funding quality research proposals. Psychologists should engage in and granting agencies should fund thematic research programmes in the national interest. At the departmental and institutional level, curriculum changes are essential to reorient Master's and doctoral programmes. They proposed professional training and real world exposure for students. The attainment of these goals, they argued, called for textbooks appropriate for the local context and training in culturally sensitive methodology.

The results of the content analysis of the statements of active researchers clearly indicated a dynamic process in the development of the discipline. Respondents frankly shared their perceptions and opinions regarding the status of the discipline in India and made a number of suggestions for changing the course of development of the discipline.

The factors responsible for the current state of the discipline and for the capability of the discipline to contribute to public welfare are dynamically interrelated. These factors, as depicted in Table 8.4, make for a complex circle of a social and professional trap, which must be broken to make way for a new direction for the growth of the discipline. The circle is more like a spiral (Adair et al., 1993). If the trend is negative, it becomes a whirlpool that drags the discipline downwards. The proposed strategies represent ways in which the circle may be broken to move in a more positive direction. For example, with discipline accomplishments there is greater public/government recognition, more resources for the discipline, hence more discipline development and contributions.

The complex task of discipline development in developing societies, which are constantly plagued by social, economic, and political difficulties, is not

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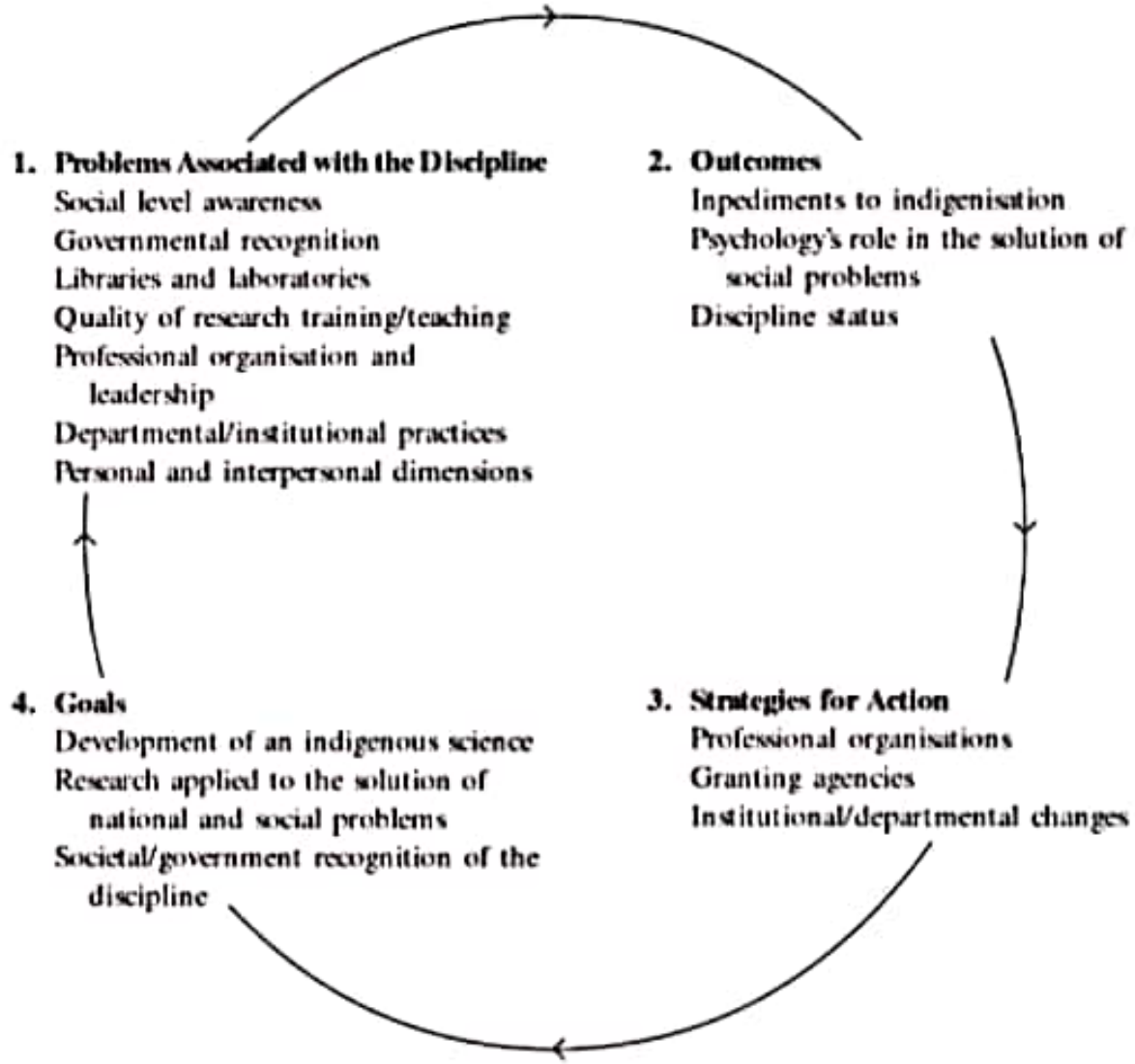
Table 8.4 Summary



easy. Solutions have to emerge locally. In this sense, suggestions and recommendations of Indian psychologists have to be examined. They clearly visualised the directions and goals of the discipline and strategies for action to be adopted. There may be many interruptive forces that obstruct the achievement of these goals. The challenge facing developing countries is how to overcome these interruptive forces, even though some of them may be beyond their control.

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

In the absence of a systematic evaluation of quality and usefulness of finished products like psychology graduates and research outputs, there is hardly any basis to objectively assess their efficacy in various areas where they are

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